THEOSOPHY AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH

BY CLAUDE BRAGDON

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OBJECTS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

First—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of Race, Creed, Sect, Caste, or color.

Second—To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy, and Science.

Third—To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

THE Theosophical Society is composed of students, belonging to any religion in the world or to none, who are united by their approval of the above objects, by their wish to remove religious antagonisms and to draw together men of good-will whatsoever their religious opinions, and by their desire to study religious truths and to share the results of their studies with others. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by purity of life, by devotion to high ideas, and they regard Truth as a prize to be striven for, not as a dogma to be imposed by authority. They consider that belief should be the result of individual study or intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. They extend tolerance to all, even to the intolerant, not as a privilege they bestow, but as a duty they perform; and they seek to remove ignorance, not to punish it. They see every religion as an expression of Divine Wisdom, and prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to proselytism. Peace is their watch-word, as Truth is their aim.

HISTORY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE Theosophical Society was founded by Madame H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel H. S. Olcott, in 1875. Colonel Olcott was the first President and he held the office continuously until his death in 1907, serving in that capacity thirty-two years. The office thus vacated by death was filled by the election of Mrs. Annie Besant. The headquarters of the Society are at Adyar, Madras, India, and National Sections and Branches exist in various nations throughout the world. The chief officer of the American Section is Weller Van Hook, M. D., of Chicago, and the American headquarters are in that city. Annual conventions are held by the National Sections and biennial conventions by the Society, the place of meeting for the latter being some European city. Anybody desiring further information about the Society should address Weller Van Hook, 103 State street, Chicago, the General Secretary for America.

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WRITING in the early part of the nineteenth century, Schopenhauer declared that the religious literature of India, then for the first time made known to European culture, was the fruit of the highest knowledge and wisdom, and he predicted that its influence would permeate the civilization of the West to such an extent as to bring about as great a change in human life and human thought as did the revival of Greek and Roman literature and art in the fifteenth century which inaugurated the Renaissance. Opinions may differ as to whether this prediction is being fulfilled or ever will be, but indications are not lacking that it is even now coming true. Certain it is that precious seeds of ancient wisdom, reverently preserved by a tradition-loving people — like grains of wheat found in the wrappings of a mummy — being replanted in the fertile soil of minds prepared to receive them, are germinating in the Western world.

There are four principal sources through which this ancient wisdom is reaching the West. First, through the translations of the

sacred writings themselves; second, through the sympathetic interpretation of Eastern ideals in terms intelligible to Western understanding by such well-qualified and articulate converts as the late Sir Edwin Arnold, the late Lafcadio Hearn, and Fielding Hall; third, through the presentment of these ideals by such ardent and accomplished Orientals as the late Swami Vivikananda and Okakura Kakutzo; and lastly, through the propaganda of the Theosophical Society, at present headed by Mrs. Annie Besant.

Of the above enumerated sources the most important, in the opinion of the writer, is the one last mentioned. It is true that much of the Theosophical literature—that of the early days of the Society—is hard and dry: unsweetened, as it were, by any milk of human kindness, or chaotic and obscure: abounding in strained diction and capital letters, yet in that literature, to those endowed with the soul-vision to perceive it, is revealed a cosmic scheme of incomparable breadth and grandeur, sublime in its simplicity and universality, at once reasonable to the mind and satisfying to the sense of justice, reconciling and co-ordinating all ancient religions, and embracing, yet transcending modern science. It is its own justification, entirely aside from the high claim made for its source and origin.

This claim is, in effect, that modern Theosophy is a restatement of "The Ancient Wis-

dom": that Science of the Soul which forms the basis, the inner content, of every great world religion; that this wisdom is, in its completeness, the particular possession of beings of exalted power, knowledge, and compassion, who conserve, develop, and at certain times and under certain conditions give it forth to the world—though it is at all times accessible to the earnest seeker. One of these times being ripe, and the conditions ready, it is asserted that these Elder Brothers of Mankind, in pursuance of an anciently ordained and far-reaching plan, have given this ancient wisdom to the Western world through the agency of the Theosophical Society.

The history of modern Theosophy is so crowded with schisms and scandals, that it may not be out of place here to narrate the manner in which the present writer overcame a prejudice which doubtless also exists in the minds of many, and arrived at his present view of the Society's actors and activities—a view which later and larger knowledge has but tended to confirm.

About a year ago there was slipped under my office door an announcement of a series of lectures to be given under the auspices of the Theosophical Society by one C. Jinarajadasa, of Columbo, Island of Ceylon. On the front page of the folder was his portrait in half-tone: a dusky young gentleman with curly hair,

an untroubled intellectual brow, eyes dreamy yet penetrating behind gold-bowed glasses, a sweet mouth and a firm chin. It was a face to which I took an instant liking, but the announced lectures did not attract me, for they appeared to deal with matters with which I had been long familiar through the theosophical literature I had read when it was first given to the world in the eighties. I had been interested in that literature, but in common with many others I had been deterred from following up my interest by the bad odor which soon afterwards came to be attached to the very word Theosophy by reason of the internecine warfare of the Society, and of the alleged exposure of Madame Blavatsky, its founder, by a member of the London Society for Psychical Research. The Theosophists I happened to have known did not particularly attract me; I had no means of testing the validity of the claims made concerning the giving of this alleged ancient wisdom to the Western world; moreover, the reiterated insistence upon mahatmas and their miracles, with so little said about conduct of life, had seemed to me a dangerous inversion of the true order. I had therefore ceased my trafficking with latter-day Theosophy altogether, though the belief still lingered that behind that fantastic curtain lay some vital, some illuminating truth.

I was sufficiently interested in the leaflet to which I have referred to attend one of the

lectures it advertised, and gained my first view of the man who was to unlock a closed door of my consciousness. The subject of his lecture was "The Law of Karma"; there was nothing new in it for me, since the law of karma was to my thinking as much a part of the general scheme of things as the law of gravitation itself. The exposition was adequate, but not eloquent, delivered in excellent English, in a wonderfully pleasant voice. The lecturer as he progressed gave glimpses of a remarkable and charming personality, of great earnestness, refinement, spirituality, and intellectual power. I have heard the comments of many persons who attended his lecture, upon whom he seems to have made the same deep impression, not so much by what he said—for to many that seemed nonsense—as by what he was. At the end, my curiosity being gratified, I went away counting it an evening not ill-spent, though far from lively, and dismissed the matter from my mind.

On the following morning, as I was walking down the street I encountered my young Singhalese aimlessly wandering in the opposite direction. I was seized by an impulse not to let him vanish out of my life, and under pressure of it I spoke to him, explaining that I had heard him lecture, was interested, and knowing something of Theosophy, craved first-hand information which I had reason to believe he could supply. He was pleasant and

accommodating, but at the same time showed a certain reserve, which I afterwards found to be characteristic of the man, or perhaps of his race. We were soon facing one another from opposite armchairs in the club library, for all the world like two friendly but wary antagonists about to begin some absorbing game for a high stake. It was, in point of fact, a game which we were playing: part of the great game of life. The stake was the most precious a man can play for — the soul's salvation; our cards were our knowledge of life; if his proved higher I lost; but all paradoxically, if I lost I won, for if he converted me to his way of thinking I asked nothing better; but I believed that I held a good hand (to carry out the figure), and I was keen to play it for all it was worth. The opening being mine, I led from my long suit first: my knowledge of the undignified history of the Theosophical Society and of the eccentric personality of its founder. He answered all my questions directly and well, mitigating nothing. In speaking of Madame Blavatsky he did not claim that she had never made mistakes, nor did he deny that she had faults of character, but sketched the portrait, with all the reality of life, of a great and puissant personality attempting, amid treacheries, misrepresentations, and discouragements of every sort, to carry out a singularly difficult mission for which she was

in many superficial ways unfitted: making mistakes, suffering from them, learning by them, and finally delegating her task to another (Mrs. Besant), whom she had trained for the purpose. The dissensions which had at various times rent the Society he seemed to regard as the reverse of unfortunate, for though they had interfered with the rapid spread of theosophic knowledge, like certain diseases they had purged the organism, in that they had discouraged triflers and faddists, and drawn together into a compact and workable body those earnest and devoted persons who perceived their mission to be not the forcing of their teachings upon reluctant minds, but the offering of them to those who felt the need of them. The Society, as he phrased it, existed for the sake of Theosophy, and not Theosophy for the sake of the Society, that being only the small, self-conscious center, as it were, of a new stirring of the soul of the world, as yet only in its beginnings, of which Spiritualism, Christian Science, the New Thought, the mystical and humanitarian movement within the churches, and the altered attitude of science towards the mysteries of existence, are so many outward and more unconscious pulsations. Every reaction against the purely materialistic conception of life was, to my young man's view, essentially Theosophic, and what he looked for was not so much the growth of the Society into a rich

and powerful organization, as the silent and unconscious assimilation through it by the world of the fundamental Theosophic tenets: karma, reincarnation, man's finer bodies, and the like. America was destined to be the stage on which would be enacted the next great world drama: the attempt to develop a people and a government of which human brotherhood would be the central and controlling idea. America, therefore, was the most favorable field for a propaganda the avowed chief aim of which was "to form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color."

All this and more I gathered from my many talks with Mr. Jinarajadasa, for we saw one another often. The more I saw of him the better I liked him, and the more remarkable he seemed. At times it was as though his lips had been touched by a coal from the altar, for he talked like one inspired. The very presence of a man of his race and type in a society such as ours seemed to me highly significant, even dramatic. A graduate of Cambridge University, and therefore equipped with that learning which the Anglo-Saxon gives his most favored sons, gifted with that ease and polish which extended travel and much contact with cultivated people alone impart, he used these accomplishments, and all the others which were his by nature, solely in the service of his

spiritual message — the gift of Asia to the West.

He had few belongings, lived, so to speak, in a trunk: a wanderer, an ascetic, yet I think I never met a happier man. All consecrated lives, no matter how hard, are happy, but the secret of this man's happiness, I gathered, lay in the fact that he was doing the work of those whom he called the Masters — the Men Behind. To him Theosophy had never been that granite mountain of sublime thought which I had hitherto conceived it, but a full, active life of endeavor on various planes of being, under the guidance and instruction of a beloved master to whom he was linked by the closest karmic ties, and who, in turn, was in communication with those highly developed human beings, supreme in wisdom, power, and goodness: the Elder Brothers of Mankind.

In my more intimate talks with him, Mr. Jinarajadasa made reference to the Masters in a manner which betrayed the fact that these mysterious personages occupied a large part of the foreground of his consciousness. He alone of all the people I had ever met appeared to be possessed of knowledge concerning them, but he was so shy of imparting it that if the Masters really exist the place of their residence and the particulars of their lives is a jealously guarded secret. I was given to understand that there were none in this

country, only one in Europe, and of the number in Asia two in particular were behind the Theosophical movement, working through the president of the Society and some few properly qualified members.

The only logical explanation of the mystery of the Masters and their place in human evolution will appear to those accustomed only to Western modes of thought, even more incredible than the mystery itself, since it involves the idea of reincarnation,—of the development of individuality by means of successive returns to earthly existence in different bodies,—an idea which, though familiar to two-thirds of the human family to-day, though of all but universal acceptance in ancient times, though taught by Pythagoras and Plato, and reiterated in various forms by such modern philosophers as Schopenhauer and Goethe, and such modern poets as Shelley, Wordsworth, and Browning (to mention only a few), yet finds no place in the excellently arranged but rather austerely furnished chamber of modern consciousness. Granted this evolution through repeated existences, with the appearance of free will, that is, the power of choice, it is inevitable that some, by wiser choosing and by the exercise of greater effort, should outstrip their fellows in the long journey, for we observe the thing happening all about us within the smaller compass of a single generation. These early ripening intel-

ligences, when they have attained to a certain proficiency in life (far above any proficiency known to us), become, by occult means, aware of one another, and then, helped mutually, and by others still higher in the evolutionary scale, their progress becomes increasingly rapid, until they transcend humanity as we know it, altogether. Moved by compassion for the upward struggling millions, some of them, and these are the Masters, postpone the bliss of their Nirvana, and band together to become the teachers, the saviors, the conservers of the accumulated wisdom of mankind, and particularly that *Theo-Sophia* — Divine Wisdom — which may be defined as the law according to which spirit manifests itself, and the application of that law to the individual, by means of which the ordinary unfolding of consciousness may be enormously accelerated.

This Secret Doctrine, so dearly won, so carefully conserved, has formed the inner content of every religion worthy of the name. It was taught by the priests of ancient Egypt in their Lesser and Greater Mysteries; Pythagoras and Plato interpreted it in terms acceptable to the Greek understanding. It is contained in the Upanishads of the Hindus, the Zend-avesta of the Persians, the Kabbala of the Hebrews; it is the key which unlocks the fanciful allegories of mediæval alchemy; the secret masonic guilds of Northern Europe

built and carved it into their cathedrals; it was known to the Gnostics, and to the Brothers of the Rosy Cross. The Order which knows, guards, and gives forth this Science of the Soul has never lacked representatives, nor does it lack them to-day. In the East, where these men dwell, their existence is a matter of knowledge: Oriental literature abounds in references to them. These "Arahats of the Guarded Slope," as they are sometimes called, keep watch and ward over developing humanity. Whenever there is danger of its losing its way, one of these Great Ones reveals himself, and by precept and example points out the true path: the path of wisdom and of love. Buddha was such a teacher, and such was Christ: one to the East, the other to the West, they brought the same message, though Buddha dealt more with its wisdom aspect, while its love aspect finds perhaps its supreme expression in the sayings of Christ.

This idea that humanity, all unknowing and unheeding, is watched over and helped by a graduated hierarchy of superior intelligences should not seem incredible. Professor Huxley once made the assertion that there must be beings in the universe whose intelligence is as much beyond ours as ours exceeds that of a black beetle, and great intelligence implies great love. If such beings exist, it may be urged, we should see them,

know them—but should we? We only see and know that which in some sort we are. "Man animates all he can," says Emerson, "and sees only that which he animates." We are creatures of imperfection, our senses, like our mind and our moral nature, respond feebly and to but few of the vibrations of which the universe is full. Theosophy teaches that we are shut off from these invisible helpers by our own materiality, skepticism, and irreverence. There never was a time when they were not accessible to the earnest seeker, and they are accessible to-day. They are more eager to give than we can be to receive, but the initial effort must come from below: this is the law. Christ said truly, "Seek and ye shall find."

Theosophy comes to the Western world reiterating this message, after the lapse of eighteen hundred years. Mr. Jinarajadasa was once asked in my presence why, if, as he alleged, the teachings of Theosophy were practically identical with the teachings of Christ, Theosophy should be promulgated in a Christian country like our own. His answer was that the teachings of Christ have become so overlaid by Christian orthodoxy of one sort and another, that a new statement of the Ancient Wisdom in terms intelligible to the modern understanding is desirable in this country just as it is in his own, where the teachings of Buddha have stiffened

into an orthodoxy of a different sort. He reminded the questioner that the Christ and the Buddha both came to break down the orthodoxy of their day. The Ancient Wisdom never changes: the change is in the form alone. Its glowing truths, like the brilliants of a kaleidoscope, from time to time in obedience to some cyclic law fall into a different order and so make a different pattern. The present happens to be one of these transitional periods: the moment of the turning of the cosmic kaleidoscope.

What is this Ancient Wisdom, which, antedating recorded history, is yet the New Thought of the present hour? The answer to that question would require, instead of the paragraph which I shall devote to it, a separate essay — a volume, an entire literature; yet the answer lies dormant in the mind of everyone: it is the knowledge and the love of what the Chinese call Tao, the Hindus the Higher Self, the Christians, Christ. The Ancient Wisdom is at once a philosophy, a science, and an art. As a philosophy it postulates man as the reflection of the cosmos, "his inner and real Self being eternal, one with the Self of the universe; and his evolution, by repeated incarnations, into which he is drawn by desire, and from which he is set free by knowledge and sacrifice, becoming divine in potency as he has ever been divine in latency." As a science it presents the cosmic scheme

in detail, crossing all the t's and dotting all the i's, so to speak; it cognizes and examines the constitution, mechanism, and phenomena of the various planes or modifications of matter through which the Great Self manifests itself, and the vehicles or bodies corresponding to these planes in which the individualized Self energizes on each of them in turn,—or, according to the ancient teaching, the universe is instinct in every part with vibrations of life, or consciousness, and evolution is a continually increasing power to respond to these vibrations. At the present stage of his evolution, man responds to only a few, and these put a limit on his feelings and knowledge, but the power is latent in him to respond to them all, and birth and rebirth, life, death, love, and suffering are Nature's means to bring about this result. As an art, that is practically, the Ancient Wisdom offers a scientifically worked out method whereby this evolutionary process may be hastened, and the Self sooner merged with the All-Self.

Now each science and each art must have its own method: if a man wants to be an astronomer he goes to an observatory and studies the stars through a telescope; if a chemist, he goes to the laboratory, compounds substances and experiments with them; or if he desires to be a painter he gets brushes, pigments, canvas, and sets to work. In every case his success will be measured by his abil-

ity to concentrate all the powers of his mind upon the subject in hand. Similarly, if a man's aim is to know and to develop his higher Self, he uses the same instrument: the mind, and the same method: concentration; but because his Self is within and behind the mind he must turn the mind inward, and this requires a great deal of practice. From our childhood upward we have been taught only to pay attention to things external, never to pay attention to things internal. To turn the mind, as it were, inside, stop it from going outside, and then to concentrate all its powers and throw them upon the mind itself in order that it may know its own nature, is very hard work. Though I do not recommend the experiment, for it might prove disturbing and perhaps dangerous, I venture to assert that any one who would eliminate from his diet all products of ferment and decay, and for say fifteen minutes every day assiduously would practice this stilling of the mind, and the focusing of it on that which is within, before the year was over he would find things happening to him unrecorded in any physiology or psychology. He would find them described accurately and in detail in certain books written some thousands of years ago, however,—and with a complete nomenclature full of fine shades of meaning, for realms of matter and states of consciousness of which we do not even recognize the exist-

ence. Language is always the correlative of something; is it reasonable to suppose that this Ancient Wisdom is all a fabric in the air, —that the centuries of effort which the Hindus have devoted to the religious life have been utterly barren of result? The argument so often advanced, with such show of reason, that the present condition of India is not favorable to the high claims made for its ancient religion, I have no space to answer here, since it involves the karma of nations, their growth and decay. It is only necessary to remember that what is sown here is often reaped afar; the spiritual seed sown on the banks of the Nile and of the Ganges, and in Palestine, so long ago, we are about to reap here and now. For with the simultaneous return to incarnation of certain groups of souls, the collective human mind is rapidly entering new regions of consciousness, and this will result in the development of new faculties, organs, powers, in the same slow, orderly, and healthy fashion that those which we have already won have been developed in the past. Every flower bed has its early blossoms, on every tree some fruit ripens and falls before the rest; and because the fruit of the human tree ripens unequally, certain of those in whom these faculties, organs, powers, are already partially operative, are producing (for the most part ignorantly, blindly, automatically) phenomena

so strange, so disturbing, so outside ordinary experience, and so counter to some of the materialistic theories of matter, that most scientific men have been disposed to deny them, ignore them, or confine them to the realm of the merely pathological. This last has been rendered easy by reason of the fact that just as the windfall is generally found to have a worm at its core, the prematurely developed human being is apt to be neurotic or otherwise unhealthy,—the body being not yet evolved which is able to withstand the shock of these etheric forces. Those scientists who have shown a disposition to examine, understand, and classify the phenomena of the so-called subconscious—to chart those regions into which the mind can plunge but into which the senses cannot as yet penetrate—find themselves handicapped, first, by the absence of any rational hypothesis to confirm or to confute; and second, by the inadequacy for their purpose of existing machinery and methods—since it is clear that the subjective cannot be attained by the same instruments and methods of study which discover the objective. Lacking the first, they have thus far only succeeded in accumulating a mass of sufficiently well authenticated, but confused and often conflicting evidence; lacking the second, they have seized upon the medium, the clairvoyant, the hypnotized subject as a means to gain their end, ignorant or un-

mindful of the harmfulness and danger of this method.

Theosophy — the Ancient Wisdom — answers both these needs: the first, by furnishing a rational hypothesis which accords with all the known facts, which every new discovery helps to confirm, and which will help to new discoveries; the second, by pointing out the way to the development of those finer vehicles of consciousness which are man's already, though he has not learned to use them, by means of which it is possible to investigate transcendental matter at first hand. This being so, it is no wonder that Theosophy makes so strong an appeal to a certain type of scientific mind. Mr. Van Hook, the present secretary of the American Branch of the Theosophical Society, is the chief surgeon of the hospital of the Northwestern University; Sir William Crooks is a Theosophist, a member of the English branch; and Sir Oliver Lodge, though not outwardly identified with the movement, is in touch with several of its prime movers, and in his recent writings he shows an increasing hospitality to certain phases of Theosophic thought. It is the opinion of Mr. Jinarajadasa, himself a scientist of more than amateur ability, that the world will receive its next spiritual impetus from science: that science will put upon a firm and rational foundation the faith of the mystic, the altruism of the saint.

Theosophy, because it is both a religious science and a scientific religion, meets the spiritual needs of the present time. These appear to be three in number: first, since this is a practical and scientific age, religion, in order to be a power in the world, must be practical and scientific. Theosophy is both these things and at no sacrifice of that mystical quality which is the dynamic force at the root of every religion. As has been said, "it restores to the world the science of the spirit, teaching man to know the spirit as himself, and the mind and body as his servants." Second, the need is felt in all the churches of some unifying, co-ordinating force. Theosophy is such a force because it embraces "that body of truths which forms the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It illuminates the scriptures and the doctrines of religion by unveiling their hidden meanings, thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition." Third, a religion which meets the needs of the day must embody as its cardinal principle the idea of human brotherhood. Buddhism and Christianity alike embody this idea, but Theosophy takes it directly into the realm of the actual by showing that the principle of individuation whereby each man appears to himself a separate entity is a temporary state, and in the manner of an illusion

possible to be transcended: that the many selves are in reality One Self, differing only in the degree of their realization of this solidarity.

As a result of the new ferment of psychic life in our materialistic civilization, the vast reservoir of Theosophic knowledge and experience is being tapped in several different places at once, and the Spiritualist, the Christian Scientist, the devotee of the so-called New Thought, each bathes in his little stream which to his newly awakened perception seems to him ocean wide. The first communes with the spirits of his dead, or that which he believes to be such; the second denies the existence of matter and puts at naught the achievements of medical and surgical science; the third meditates on his solar plexus, and breathing through alternate nostrils, feels new potencies stirring within him. All incur dangers the nature of which only the trained occultist knows, and it is another of the missions of Theosophy to instruct all such well meaning but usually misguided persons as to just how their particular fragment of truth fits into the general scheme of things, and to warn them against dangerous practices. Theosophy is in a position to do this, because it recognizes the reality of the phenomena with which these cults concern themselves, while science does not. The man trained in Theosophy is

able to instruct the spiritualistic medium that by relinquishing himself to the obsession of any wandering spirit of the Astral plane he is enervating his will and forging new fetters for already earth-bound spirits, delaying their normal evolution and his own. He tells the Christian Scientist that by his insistence upon the truth that all matter is a manifestation of spirit, and vitalized by it, he fails to do justice to the complementary truth, that spirit while clothed in the matter of the physical plane partakes of its nature and incurs its limitations, and must be dealt with according to the laws and operations of that plane. He tells the New Thought devotee that while meditation on the solar plexus and restraint of the breath may for a time improve the health and develop a low form of psychism, without a corresponding moral and intellectual control they degenerate into Hatha Yoga practices which are fraught with danger.

In fine, Theosophy teaches that there are no short cuts to health and happiness and knowledge: that the way to liberation is by doing one's duty and following one's conscience, but it also teaches that without omitting an essential step of the journey, by right thinking and economy and concentration of effort, the normal rate of advance may be enormously accelerated.

While Theosophy concerns itself with psychic phenomena, so-called, since it cog-

nizes vast realms of invisible matter, each teeming with its appropriate life—realms which man, in his normal evolution, comes to know one by one and master just as he is already coming to know and master the matter of the physical plane, on which his consciousness for the most part dwells—it nevertheless does not base its claim to consideration upon "tests," upon "manifestations" as Spiritualism does. The inception of the Theosophical movement was attended with phenomena of a so-called miraculous nature—as every great religious movement has been—in order to attract the attention of the world. This is no longer necessary, and the later policy of the Society has been to bring the philosophical, humanitarian and ethical aspects of the Ancient Wisdom most prominently into view. I am informed, and I have abundant reason to believe that many of those following Theosophic lines of training are in the possession and the daily exercise of powers which might pass among the uninformed as miraculous, but as pupils of occultism are pledged to use their powers neither for gain nor for display it is small wonder that outsiders do not see evidences of them.

The fact that the Theosophic movement is so largely a feministic one has often elicited a sneer from the unthinking, but what spiritual movement of the present day has